12 June 1966

The Editors
The Nation
333 Sixth Ave
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sirs,

Fred Cook, in part I of his article "Some Unanswered Questions," rightly quotes the testimony of FBI expert Robert A. Frazier to demonstrate Frazier's extreme reticence about the hypothesis that one bullet had hit both President Kennedy and Governor Connally. Frazier refused to say that such a thing had "probably occurred;" he testified that he didn't have the evidence on which to base a finding of probability.

But Cook neglects to mention that the Warren Report (page 105) falsely asserts that Frazier testified that the bullet that hit President Kennedy in the back "probably struck Governor Connally." That is a serious misrepresentation of expert testimony—testimony that undermined the single-missile hypothesis rather than, as the Warren Report asserts, supported it. The misleading account of Frazier's testimony is all the more serious because, as Cook points out, the single-missile hypothesis is essential to the proposition of a lone assassin.

Cook, like Herbert Packer in an earlier critique in The Nation, falls into the trap of accepting as valid the so-called "hard evidence" against Oswald. That suggests to me that Cook's research in the 26 volumes of Hearings and Exhibits stopped short. No one who has made an exhaustive and painstaking study of the 26 volumes would say blandly, as Cook does, that Oswald had a forged "Hidell" card on his person when he was arrested, or that the paper bag was used to carry the rifle into the Depository, or that the nearly-whole bullet was recovered from the Governor's stretcher. The testimony and documents throw grave doubt on those and other items of alleged "hard evidence."

Thus, while the belated acknowledgment that there are unanswered questions in the Warren Report is a welcome and useful theme in the pages of The Nation, it is regrettable that Fred Cook has yielded to the Warren Commission points which the Commission has not earned. Regrettable also is the fact that the editors again have made their obeisance to the "good faith" of the Commission and its lawyers. To have done so in November 1964, before the Hearings and Exhibits were released, was a manifestation of blind faith rather than the scientific method. To do so now, in the same breath that concedes the troubling presence of unanswered questions (something of an understatement!) suggests unwillingness to permit objective facts to interfere with premature judgments, today all the less warranted in the light of the misrepresentation of Frazier's testimony and similar defects in the Warren Report which become obvious when its assertions are tested against the Hearings and Exhibits.

Exhaustive study of the evidence suggests that the presumption-of-innocence which has governed The Nation's view of the Warren Commission might more deservingly have been invoked on behalf of Lee Harvey Oswald. In reiterating confidence in the Commission's integrity, The Nation has multiplied the words it will ultimately have to eat.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12 Street
New York, N.Y. 10014